

Message Text

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45

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 /091 W

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R 031030Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2531

INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1296

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SS, MO, MR, SP, AG

SUBJ: ALGERIAN SAHARAN POLICY

REF: ALGIERS 1294

1. DURING 2 JUNE CALL ON ABERKANE, CHIEF OF NORTH AMERICAN AND WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, WE QUICKLY REVIEWED SPANISH SAHARA SITUATION.

2. I ASKED HIM IF MOROCCAN JOURNALISTS HAD SUCCEEDED IN JOINING UN MISSION IN THE SOUTH. HE RESPONDED THAT BECAUSE OF KIM IL SUNG VISIT HE HADN'T KEPT UP WITH LATEST DEVELOPMENTS, REPEATED PUBLIC EXPLANATION FOR THEIR DIFFICULTIES (REFTEL, AND ADDED THAT, AFETER ALL, ALGERIAN PRESS HAD NOT ASKED TO ACCOMPANY UN MISSION DURING ITS MOROCCO VISIT.

3. HE ASKED IF I HAD READ EL MOUDJAHID EDITORIAL OF 2 JUNE (REFTEL). I SAID YES, I HAD READ IT SEVERAL TIMES AND HAD FOUND IT VIRTUALLY INCOMPREHENSIBLE (AS HAD DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUES WITH WHOM I HAD COMPARED NOTES). ABERKANE LOOKED PAINED. HE STATED THAT IT EXACTLY REFLECTED OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT POLICY AND ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED HE HAD EVEN RECOGNIZED THE

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DRAFTER. HE TERMED IT AN "APPEAL," A "CALL," TO THE MOROCCANS

TO "STOP PLAYING WITH FIRE." HE EXPLAINED THAT HASSAN HAS BEEN STIMULATING ANTI-ALGERIAN SENTIMENT OVER THIS ISSUE BUT THAT UP TO NOW THE ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT HAD NOT MADE PUBLIC ITS PROBLEMS WITH MOROCCO AND IT MOROCCAN CAMPAIGN AGAINST ALGERIA. WITH THE PUBLICATION OF THE EDITORIAL, HE SAID, THE ALGERIAN PEOPLE WERE NOW INFORMED. HE STATED THAT IF MOROCCO CONTINUED TO "NEEDLE" ALGERIANS AS THEY HAVE BEEN DOING THERE WOULD BE SERIOUS TROUBLE.

4. I THEN ASKED HIM FOR A CLEAR STATEMENT OF ALGERIAN POLICY TOWARD THE SPANISH SAHARA. HE RESPONDED THAT IT WAS "SELF-DETERMINATION IN ADHERENCE TO THE UN CHARTER AND APPROPRIATE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS." I ASKED HIM WHAT ALGERIA WOULD DO IF THE SPANISH WERE TO WITHDRAW SUDDENLY AND THE SITUATION BEGAN TO COLLAPSE. HE RESPONDED THAT THERE WAS NO NEED FOR SPAIN TO WITHDRAW IN THIS FASHION. HE EXPLAINED THAT SPAIN HAD 30,000 TROOPS IN SPANISH SAHARA AND THAT HE DOUBTED MOROCCO WOULD ATTACK THEM. THEREFORE, HE SAID, PROBLEM WAS TO FIND WAY FOR SPAIN TO DEPART LEAVING ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENT IN PLACE.

5. HE WENT ON TO STATE THAT THE POLISARIO WAS, OF COURSE, THE ONLY VIABLE INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT IN THE SAHARA. HE COMPARED THE SITUATION IN THE SAHARA WITH THAT EXISTING IN ALGERIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE WHEN VARIOUS EMPHEMERAL INDEPENDENCE GROUPS WERE QUICKLY LIQUIDATED; HE SAID THAT THE SAME THING WOULD HAPPEN IN THE SAHARA IF NEGOTIATIONS WERE BEGUN WITH ANY GROUPS OTHER THAN THE POLISARIO. HE STRESSED THAT THE POLISARIO WAS READY TO NEGOTIATE WITH SPAIN; HE SUGGESTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS MIGHT BEGIN OVER THE FIFTEEN SPANISH SOLDIERS NOW HELD PRISONER BY THE POLISARIO AND THE POLISARIO PRISONERS HELD BY THE SPANISH. HE ENVISAGED THE NEGOTIATIONS PROCEEDING FROM THERE ONTO LARGER QUESTIONS.

6. I ASKED IF THE ALGERIANS HAD CONVEYED THIS VIEW TO MADRID. HE SAID NO, ALL THEY HAVE DONE IS TO REQUEST CLARIFICATION OF THE SPANISH STATEMENT AND THEY HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED AN ANSWER. HE STRESSED THAT ALGERIA WAS NOT INTERESTED IN ACTING AS A GO-BETWEEN FOR THE POLISARIO AND MADRID.

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7. HE RAISED QUESTION OF US PROVIDING ARMS TO MOROCCO AND ASKED WHAT US POLICY WAS ON SPANISH SAHARA. I REPLIED THAT US POLICY WAS NEUTRALITY IN SUPPORT OF PEACE AND STABILITY. HE SMILED AND NODDED.

8. COMMENT: NO DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUE WITH WHOM I SPOKE RECOGNIZED EL MODJAHID EDITORIAL AS CLEAR STATEMENT OF ANYTHING; EXTENT TO WHICH ALGERIAN PEOPLE NOW INFORMED REMAINS QUESTIONABLE.

NEVERTHELESS, GOA APPEARS TO HAVE ITS SAHARAN GOALS LINED UP
AND ITS STRATEGY DRAFTED AND LAUNCHED.
LYNE

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